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SUBJECT: FELIPE CALDERON WINS PAN PRIMARY

REF: A. MEXICO 5527

[B](#). MEXICO 6089

[C](#). MEXICO 6415

[1](#). Summary: Former Energy Secretary Felipe Calderon won PAN,s third regional primary election on Sunday, October 23 with 58 percent of the vote, and avoided a run-off election by winning just over 50 percent of the cumulative vote. Both former Interior Secretary Santiago Creel, once thought to be the favorite, and former Environmental Secretary Alberto Cardenas, conceded Sunday night and encouraged their followers to support Calderon. End Summary.

[2](#). Calderon won 13 of the 14 states that voted in the October 23 primary, taking home 58 percent of the vote. Totaling all three regional primary elections, Calderon won 24 of Mexico,s 31 states and 51.79 percent of the vote. Santiago Creel, reputedly President Fox,s favorite, won 24 percent of the vote in the third election and 32.29 percent of the cumulative vote. Alberto Cardenas proved victorious only his home state of Jalisco, and won only 15.91 percent of the cumulative vote. Over 300,000 Panistas voted in the three primary elections, including almost 200 members of the PAN living outside of Mexico who voted by internet, with 112 of those votes going to Calderon.

[3](#). Both Creel and Cardenas gave press conferences on the evening of October 23 admitting defeat and encouraging their followers to support Calderon. The PAN,s electoral committee, however, received six complaints about irregularities in the third primary including a voting station that did not open in Michoacan, and unauthorized transportation being provided to voters in Morelos, Guerrero and Sonora. The electoral committee is investigating the complaints, but their results are not expected to affect the outcome of the election. Immediately following the second regional primary on October 2, the results from two voting stations in the Yucatan, where less than 400 people cast their ballots, were questioned by the Creel camp due to complaints of irregularities. These votes were annulled the day before the third primary after an investigation by the PAN's electoral committee. Creel,s supporters challenged the results of 45 voting stations in the Yucatan, where Calderon obtained over 70 percent of the vote.

[4](#). Comment: The PAN leadership is priding itself on being the only major political party to hold transparent and democratic primary elections. PRD candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO) has no competition for his party's nomination. The PRI's brief-lived primary was marked by mud-slinging and character assassination, prompting one contender to leave the race and the second may well do so before a single primary ballot is cast. This would leave former PRI president Roberto Madrazo as the "unity" candidate, and settle the major-party line-up for 2006.

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